

**Testimony before the Michigan House of Representatives  
Great Lakes and Environment Committee**

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Michigan's water resources remain under constant threat from thirsty states and countries looking to take our water; recent developments in the South and comments from Southwestern states highlight the urgency to enact legislation.

On behalf of Clean Water Action's over 200,000 Michigan members, I would like to thank this committee for its leadership in addressing Great Lakes and water resources protections. Clean Water Action is Michigan's largest grassroots environmental organization. Over the years, we have been engaged in many water use policy discussions. Our organization is also a part of the Great Lakes, Great Michigan Coalition, which is composed of nearly 50 organizations representing over 350,000 citizens who are demanding strong water protection laws be implemented that address public trust and protect our unique resource from abusive withdrawals.

When making our determination of support or opposition to any water use legislation, we will be examining the package as a whole. Since their introduction, Clean Water Action and our coalition partners have been supportive of House Bills 4343 and 5065-5073 because they strengthen public control of our waters by:

- Ensuring public input and that water use decisions reflect the values and needs of local communities;
- Establishing a permitting process to ensure public oversight and that large quantities of our water are not set aside for water takers;
- Requiring meaningful water conservation.

As this committee has heard, in order to strengthen public trust, we must enact legislation that involves a permitting process and an administrative review of public interest in any large-scale withdrawal. The public must be involved in any decisions on how our public resources are used. We support the bills before you because they incorporate these concepts.

We are hopeful that through the legislative debate the value of public trust and control over our public resource is not lost in translation. Clean Water Action and our coalition partners look forward to continued work with this committee and your colleagues in passing water use legislation that ensures the future sustainability of our treasured water resources.